

Touchstone

Surrey
Earth
Mysteries



No. 45

July 1996

SEMG/TEMS Field Trip

The Surrey Hills - Investigation of the St. Martha's Quest Terrain
by Eileen Roche

On Sunday 12th May 1996, a merry party set out from Eileen's house in sunshine to investigate some of the Surrey Hills connected by sight lines or legends to St. Martha's Hill. Chris, Victor, Bob, Lionel, Peter and his wife, Reg and Gerda, Mick and Lorraine, and Clive arrived safely, but due to an unfortunate misunderstanding, Jimmy did not make it. The party made its way firstly to Pitch Hill. There Eileen set the scene by relating the *Story of Clive and Eileen's Quest* which briefly is as follows:

A few months earlier, a group of LEMC members had been celebrating a birthday outing to Surrey with Eileen, who had taken them to St. Martha's in the evening. There, they had been intrigued to find an unusual stained glass memorial window high up on the wall. This had sparked Eileen and Clive to embark on a Quest to find out about the person who had made the window. So far nothing has been discovered about the artist, but extensive research undertaken by Eileen and Clive has revealed a fascinating story about the family who donated the window.

Clive described to the party the results of his research in the London records office, and his and Eileen's field trips to London in quest of information about the family. Also, Rob Stephenson of LEMC discovered during diligent research the whereabouts of some of the family graves, whose inscriptions added zest to the Quest.

**SURREYEARTHMYSTERIESGROUPMEETSONTHESECONDWEDNESDAYOF
EACHMONTH(EXCEPTAUGUSTANDDECEMBER)ATADDLESTONE**

Practical information yielded by the research included signatures of key members of the family concerned, and their dates of birth, marriage and death. This enabled numerological and graphological analyses to be undertaken, with fascinating results. The historical central characters of the Quest were firmly linked to places of power, such as St. Martha's.

Research undertaken on St. Martha's revealed an astonishing host of ancient legends and tales, and with assistance from Jack Gale (well known for his Sacred Greenwich Walks), links were made to a prehistoric goddess associated with hunting. In turn, this led to research into Neolithic hunting patterns in Surrey, and a survey of their movements, camps and habitations around St. Martha's.

Pitch Hill is a powerful place within sight of St. Martha's, and the company was invited by Eileen to step back in time and try to imagine the Neolithic landscape as it would have appeared to a band of hunters. Everyone wondered if Pitch Hill and St. Martha's may have been beacon or firetop hills.

The next hill to be tackled was Holmbury, with its Iron Age ringed fort, ramparts still visible today. There, an odd incident occurred when a man was encountered who had lost his wife. The party was instrumental in obtaining help and the subsequent recovery of the distressed woman.

On top of the hill, Eileen regaled the party with some of the stories and legends she had come across in the course of research for the Quest. These ranged from local giantesses to prehistoric ice goddesses and the origins of the Mother Goose nursery character. Clive described the personalities of the central characters of the Quest, and some interesting deductions made from the known facts in the case.

Lunch was taken at the Stephan Langton at Friday Street, which all enjoyed, and Eileen described the position of ley lines in the surrounding hills, as plotted by Jimmy.

Leith Hill was the next to be tackled, and the view from the tower was enjoyed, all hills being visible. St. Martha's and Pitch Hill were identified. Lionel assisted in describing the history of Leith Tower, Eileen gave the story associated with Friday Street, and a brief history of Stephan Langton. Clive continued the story of the Quest.

As the evening drew in, the party explored Anstiebury Camp, another Iron Age ringed encampment with powerful energy, and linked to the other hills by energy lines. Eileen gave the results of her archaeological research, and everyone enjoyed viewing the maps and reports. The party then returned to Eileen's house for tea and chat, sorry not to have had Jimmy with them.

Herbal Cures of the British Romany Gypsies **by Micheal O'hAodha**

People say that for every illness there is always a part of nature which will alleviate it. We find nowadays that many of the so-called "new" medicines were once used by "primitive" races. The Romany Gypsies have always been experts in herb-lore and recognise the place of herbs in both preventative medicine and in alleviating the symptoms of various illnesses and diseases. Most gypsy children learn about herbs at an early age. They know that raspberry leaves make a helpful drink when a girl reaches puberty; the drink also makes childbirth easier. The young married gypsy woman makes her own test for pregnancy and often has the edge on her more sophisticated "sisters". She places a few spots of her urine on one of the big coarse leaves of the dandelion; if red blisters form on the leaves the woman is pregnant. The dandelion is a favourite cure for a number of serious ailments. Liver complaints, kidney complaints, jaundice, dropsy and so on, are all helped by eating dandelion leaves. In the spring, the washed, tender leaves taste very similar to lettuce except that they tend to be a little more bitter, although not as bitter as chicory, but dandelion is much better than either lettuce or chicory for purifying the blood. The juice from the stem is very good for curing warts. Dandelion leaves can also be used for easing asthma. A herbal cigarette made up of dried dandelion leaves and eyebright leaves is smoked. If a stronger dose is needed one can smoke a mixture of dried dandelion leaves, coltsfoot, parsley, sage, lavender, rosemary and thyme. This mixture is also used for all sorts of other bronchial and lung complaints.

Romanies know the nettle to be an invaluable plant for the cure of a multitude of ailments. A poultice of the green leaves steeped for a few hours in water will relieve pain, including neuralgia. Some of the older gypsies, after a lifetime exposed to the elements, develop rheumatism, for which they take bruised nettle leaves and rub them on the skin. Young Romany girls use a nettle brew as a hair tonic while the elderwomen use it to bring back the natural black colour of their hair. Men can also use nettles as a prevention against baldness. They gather the nettle plants in the month of July and heather seeds in the second week of September. Both sets of plants are dried out and from October onwards equal parts of dried nettles and heather seeds must be brewed in a pot of water for twenty minutes. The liquid is strained off and bottled. It is rubbed into the scalp every night after washing the head in warm water with a dash of cider vinegar in it. Hedgehog oil and a lotion made from St. John's wort are used in the same way.

Nettle tea, given very hot, relieves fevers and colds, and the boiled leaves applied externally will stop bleeding almost immediately. Indeed many gypsies have a great belief in the use of "blood purifiers" as an aid towards general well-being and ritual draughts of nettle tea are taken to keep the blood in order and to prevent skin complaints. The Romanies believe that most skin complaints can be avoided by eating plenty of fresh vegetables as salad. Chickweed or carrots eaten in your salad is particularly good as are young stinging-nettles

boiled down into a mock-spinach. For rashes such as heat-rash a good blood purifier is to take an infusion of marsh trefoil, buckbean or bogbean leaves. Coltsfoot and horehound are good for wheezy chests and the more ambitious gypsies add bittersweet, burdock, and Saint-John's-Wort to their blood purifiers. Coltsfoot is also used for the treatment of piles. An ointment is made from the juice of the fresh leaves of coltsfoot - either obtained fresh or by pressing out in a screw-press or boiled down in water or unsalted lard. Another ointment is prepared from the pilewort.

The Romanies have a number of methods to reduce fevers. Blackberry leaves can be smoked as a herbal tobacco or grasses such as dog grass, twitch grass or couch grass can be boiled down into a syrup and taken cold. infusions of either dried cowslips or the dried leaves of the foxglove can also be taken to alleviate the worst effects of fever. Several other infusions were used in the past including those of the sticklewort and dittany or wood-sage.

Two Romany Remedies:

Rheumatism

DandelionRoot

Boil one ounce in one and a half pints of water for twenty minutes, making up to one pint after allowing for evaporation. Strain. Dose: A wineglassful of the liquor twice daily. N.B. - This is also good for liver disorders.

Blood-Pressure

The common Stinging-Nettle (Urtica dioica).

Boil one ounce in one pint of water for five minutes. Strain and re-boil the liquid before bottling. Dose: Take a small wineglassful three times daily.

[This note is based upon the holdings of the Gypsy collections at the University of Liverpool, England which includes the archive of the Gypsy Lore Society and the Scott MacFie Collection]

EARTH ENERGIES & BELIEFS IN WEST AFRICA

OBSERVATIONS MADE AUGUST 1993

by Eileen Roche

Last August, with family and friends, I found myself deep in the West African bush, living in southeastern Nigerian villages. It was the rainy season, so everywhere the vegetation was thick, lush and fertile, impenetrable in places. The dusty red tracks in the bush tended to run between villages in dead straight lines, and during rain storms became raging torrents of water. The countryside was incredibly beautiful, with many small hills, some forests, and some swamp land. The people were welcoming, courteous, and gentle.

There seemed to be three main forms of worship in that area: christian, muslim and pagan. Everyone freely admitted and were proud of their christianity or mohammedanism, but no-

one we met admitted to being a pagan. Many churches and mosques had been built on ley or earth energy lines, particularly in the towns, but there were many more pagan shrines and pagan spirit houses abounding on the leys in the bush.

In Affa village I investigated the local signs of juju. The spirit houses are brick-built tin-roofed one-up one-down double storied solid constructions, sometimes painted in a chequer-pattern of blue and white, or red and brown. They have a front porch, with shuttered windows on each side of the door and on the floor above. These spirit houses are always positioned to one side or the other of the edge of a ley, and stand alone on the bush pathways and tracks. Every five years they are used in the masquerades: at these times the men who are the spirit dancers dress up in their magnificent awe-inspiring costumes and prepare themselves for the masquerade inside the spirit house. They then display their colourful, bizarre and frightening costumes by dancing in procession with music and drumming to the next spirit house along the ley. Women are forbidden to watch these ceremonies (although all the women could tell us about them in graphic detail), and apparently much palm wine is drunk. A few of the spirit houses were derelict, but others were sparkling and fine in their coats of paint.

The ley or earth energy lines themselves are warm, sluggish and meander along straight lines with the energy about chest height. The force seems much slower than that felt in England or France, and we speculated that this might be caused by the obvious and regular use being made of them by the practitioners of juju.

Directly on the ley or energy lines are shrines. These comprise four wooden upright posts forming the corners of a rectangle composed of knee high mud walls and supporting a grass or corrugated iron roof. There is always a raised earth alter in the middle with cloths lying around and many round clay pots stacked up in a pile in front of it. These shrines are dusty, untidy, and some are falling down, but all are obviously in use. They range in size from very small to quite large, and are dedicated to individual gods and entities who are named. One particularly large one near a friend's house in Affa had a powerful whirlpool of energy going into the ground at the entrance to the shrine. The local god in that part was called Odo, and he was very feared. On the lush green hillside near this shrine, Odo had a spring of pure water which we often collected for drinking. We were always very careful to thank Odo for the water because the first time we visited the spring, I asked Odo to let me know if it was ok to be there and take the water, and at that moment, a crystal round my neck fell off into my hand whilst we were climbing through the bush down the steep hillside.

In a local magazine I read about one of these shrines in Igbomokum village which is dedicated to the god Ogumaga. Ogumaga had once been a powerful warrior and witch doctor, so powerful that with mere incantation he could order the ground to open up. He had many enemies, who pursued him to Igbomokum village, but he killed them. Ogumaga then laid a curse on the village so that anyone in uniform who visited it would die without leaving

the village.

His curse is still potent and the local king, Oba Adebambo Oyenuga, has refused to go there throughout the 28 years of his reign. One of the village elders, Pa Samuel Disu, described how a villager called Mummumi forgot to take off his police uniform before returning home. Mysteriously, Mummumi fell ill and died without leaving the place.

The Ogumaga shrine is worshipped every year and the village has now become a haven for lawbreakers, who usually obtain a pardon from the king because no uniformed person will go near the village to catch them.

Not far from Affa village is another village called Eke. There we visited the compound of the powerful and dreaded (now deceased) Chief Onyeama. We learned the story of how his mother, Chinazungwa, had met her end due to the influence of one of these shrines. This was the shrine of the god Amankwo in the village centre, containing his seated carved wooden image to commemorate his extraordinary occult powers and skills. The image was regularly used as a spirit judge in murder trials as any person perjuring themselves before it would suffer a terrible death.

Onyeama as a young boy had complained to his mother that a cousin had bullied him, and not unnaturally his mother took exception to this. As her position in the household was a lowly one, she took revenge for her son by poisoning the bully, who died in agony. Chinazungwa was subsequently arrested by the village elders and forced to take a ritual oath before the Amankwo juju shrine. The choice was to confess, and face the punishment of death, or to continue to lie about the poisoning and then face death from juju, due to the holiness of the earth around the shrine. Chinazungwa immediately made a noisy and tearful confession, choosing a clean death rather than bewitchment.

We saw some very impressive carved images in the juju shrine in the market at nearby Owa village. These were two larger than life-size huge statues - the effigies of Mr. and Mrs. Owa who had founded the village. These statues were in a roofed shrine, with low mud walls surrounding them, and only men were permitted to enter or sit in the shrine. No-one could tell us how old the shrine or the effigies were - they had always been there, said the locals. In the same village a ley or earth energy line ran through a large clearing in the bush where meetings and gatherings took place. There were two enormously tall hardwood Iroko trees in the centre, with exposed roots like armchairs or seats. To one side of the clearing was a juju shrine, aligned with both the clearing and another smaller shrine some distance away further down the ley.

In Affa and Egede villages there were also many small shrines to ancestors in the gardens or compounds. Christians had a concrete grave or tombstone built on the ground, often roofed, and with low concrete walls and inscriptions with information about the deceased.

Pagans planted 4 or 6 trees in a square, kept trimmed like sticks and with palm fronds tied between them, or a thatched roof strung between the trunk poles. These ranged in size from ankle height to full grown trees. Some groups of these full grown trees seemed to be remarkably powerful.

At Awthum, a hilltop site in the bush, we found a Trappist monastery. This had a very wide ley or earth energy line running through it, marked by double-trunked trees in a row in a way that is common in England on the edge of leys. Awthum was a very spiritual and beautiful place, where we heard the monks singing psalms. A sign in a quiet courtyard said "Listen to God". On one side of the hill on the edge of the ley were laid out stations of the cross. This was the easy route for worshippers. The hard route led to stations of the cross laid out on the next hill along the ley, which was some miles distant but clearly visible and as round as Silbury, across the dense green bush of the valley.

Back in Affa, we were told of a very beautiful valley some distance away, which was a powerful and magical place. It had occult properties, and if a person was convicted of being a bad witch or wizard, the people would take them to this valley and leave them overnight for the spirits to deal with. In the morning the person would be dead, and the body would be left to lie where it had fallen. This meant that there are many human bones exposed in the valley. We asked to visit the valley and our christian hosts did their utmost to make us desist. There was no transport. There was no guide. No-one knew the way. When we persisted, we found ourselves being sprinkled with holy water and given crucifixes to wear. In the end, inexplicably, and in spite of setting out on two occasions, we never succeeded in going to the valley.

To the west of this area, we visited Benin City, famous for the bronzes (many of which were looted in colonial times, and can be seen in the museums of London and Berlin). We went to the palace of the local king, the Oba, who was holding court, along with a hundred of his chiefs, in long white robes, and a hundred priests in long red robes. The Oba has tremendous power, being a cultural as well a religious leader. We were asked to go away, as the Oba does not like strangers seeing him. I said that I hadn't come 4,000 miles not to see the Oba, so one of the Oba's grandsons took us to the Library, and fetched the Archivist, who told us the following history:

The Edo Myth of Creation

Edo is the cradle of the world. When God created the world, he created the kings who were to rule the different parts of the world. Before the kings came down from Heaven, they were asked what gift they wanted from God. Some chose wealth, some chose wisdom, some chose magical powers. By the time the choice came to the king of Benin, all that was left was a dirty snail shell full of sand. The king of Benin was a bit fed up as he took the snail shell. However, when he came down to earth, he found the land completely waterlogged. So he poured the sand on a point, now known as Benin, which immediately became dry land.

The other kings, who had been hovering about with no dry place to settle, in spite of their wealth, wisdom and magical powers, had to ask the king of Benin for land. In return, he received part of their gifts of wealth, wisdom and magic.

Eventually we were given permission to watch the Oba process with his chiefs and priests from his palace to the market place where he was going to inspect the fish stalls. The Oba was a tall, striking, regal figure. He is the hereditary ruler of the descendants of the Edo people of the myth, who can trace their civilization back about 6,000 years.

We found artistic links with European culture only in the west, in the capital city. In the gardens of Lagos museum we admired the stone monoliths on the front lawn, dating from before 1900 and thought to represent the ancestors of people in the Niger delta. One had symbols on its cheeks and neck exactly like European patterns from the Celtic era. Designs on masks and faces displayed in the courtyard had Celtic crosses in an intricate pattern of interwoven lines. A headdress depicted what looked like a winged spaceman flying through the air and wearing a backpack. On the lawn in the courtyard stood a small statue of a goblin, or bug-eyed monster alien.

What we found refreshing about our visit to this part of Africa was how the people in the bush villages take earth energies for granted, and actively utilise them in their everyday lives. Most of the people seemed to have no conception that in other parts of the world there is profound ignorance of these matters.

(c) Eileen Roche August 1993

LETTERS

From Lionel Beer, Hampton:

On page 11 of TOUCHSTONE No.44 you mention that the Bluestones of Stonehenge may have come from Ireland. In 1985 we visited Southern Ireland to see if we could find evidence in support of this theory, having earlier explored the Presceli Hills.

12th century Chronicler Geoffrey of Monmouth described the transportation of an existing monument from Ireland. Merlin was said to have supervised its removal, overcoming local objections with the justification that the (blue) stones were connected with certain religious rites and had important medicinal properties. Merlin may be a romantic myth, but the concept 'holds water'. Tom Lethbridge pointed out the difficulty of bringing the stones from Dyfed. His pendulum 'told' him they came from somewhere near Tipperary, which is on The Suir, a major Irish river. The weight of the stones could have been reduced by displacement. and they could be have been brought to the mouth of the River Avon at Christchurch. The ceremonial avenue leading from the Heel Stone at Stonehenge, still clearly visible, eventually curves round to the south and down the hill to the River Avon, a distance of only 1¹/₂ miles. I originally doubted that the flow of the Avon would be sufficient for barges, but on-site inspection near pretty West Amesbury convinced me. Also the climate may have been

different when the stones were set-up. I have a geological map of the British Isles which clearly shows areas of volcanic diorites in Ireland. In fact dowsers are welcome to experiment with this. Wetting the blue diorites changes their colour, and water run over them was claimed to have healing properties. In fact we did find a small circle of blue-stones in Southern Ireland, but did not complete our quest for the original sacred site. 1985 was the year of the Moving BVM Statue phenomena, which led me to write THE MOVING STATUE OF BALLINSPITTLE.

PS: A friend of Lethbridge suggested that since there was no sign of earth ramps at Stonehenge, the lintels were placed using snow ramps. When the snow had melted - magic! The pundits who suggest that the heavy lintels were raised on piles of logs, probably have not tried it, and I doubt whether health and safety experts would recommend this procedure!

From Nigel Mee, Hindhead:

Thank you very much for your letter dated 3rd May 1996 and enclosing the January 1996 edition of Touchstone. I read Touchstone with great interest at first and with considerable excitement by the end. I had visited Dunsfold well and church myself last summer. Alan Meredith records in 'The Sacred Yew' that there is a Green Man at the church but I couldn't find it. Have you heard of it? And what is an 'E-line'? Is this a line that you or your group have dowsed or perceived by some other means, or perhaps a generally recognised earth energy line or ley line? Also what is TEMS an acronym for, or indeed SIGAP?

Finally the excerpt from the SIGAP newsletter no. 1 regarding the line from Coneyhurst Hill (where is this?) to Beacon Hill, Hindhead meant I spent last Sunday morning traipsing along the line at the end where I live. It was great fun viewing my familiar home territory with new vision. Thanks! Incidentally Eric Parker postulates in The County Books series "Surrey" that Hydon Ball is an unrecognised ancient camp with several old trackways leading through or past it and that in the early 1900s he had been shown a sunken path there formerly used by smugglers.

I quite often visit Hindhead Common. There is no doubt that the ambience varies. In general dusk is always a "good" time to visit. Now I know about the E-line I have a possible pointer as to why. I am tonight going there to listen for nightjars. Next Saturday morning I will be there pine pulling for the NT. In my experience the atmosphere there will be very different on both occasions. So much so that it will be like two different places.

I accessed your WWW site from the Quark Internet Cafe in Guildford on the last Bank Holiday Monday. Unfortunately their set up was unable to dump data to a diskette for me (unless I had further access to HTML which I don't) so I had to print pages out. This was slow, so I only had the chance to obtain a slight overview on your group researches in to the E line. However what I did learn was very interesting and exciting. I am trying to locate a copy of Mary Caine's "The Kingston Zodaic" - are you or members of the group able to

advise me where I might find a copy?

From Norman Darwen, Leyland, Lancashire:

Rivington Pike, a small but steep - sided knoll topped with a relatively recent tower, on the brow of a much larger hill, continues to be a place of pilgrimage. From its summit, there are extensive views of the whole of west Lancashire, and on to Wales in the south and the Lake District in the north. Local tradition is to ascend the hill on Good Friday to eat Hot Cross Buns. I have a dim recollection of being told as a child that this was because of the hill's similarity to Calvary. Reports indicate that the tradition still continued this year, with around 5,000 people making the climb. Prudently, at the foot of the hill is a cafe called "The Rivington Barn" - it has a small display about the local area, and includes a stone head found in the nearby Jarrow Reservoir during the drought of 1984. It is described as "source unknown" but the caption goes on to note "this is not the head known as 'the face in the wall' which is still in the reservoir wall. Time for further investigation.

From Terry Veale, Bradford-on-Avon, Wiltshire.

It is fascinating how our ideas develop; in my case from leys to crop circles to UFOs. I wonder if there is some kind of subconscious guiding taking place? I notice so much interest these days in UFOs in particular X-files, new magazines (UFO Magazine is very good) and programmes featuring abductions and close encounters. There is "something in the air"!

From Ronald Hewson, New York.

Searching the Internet for material about Hindhead, where I was evacuated as a small boy in 1939, I came across the Surrey Earth Mysteries Group. I don't think I've heard of leys before, but your site has piqued my interest. Even as a child I was struck by the strange atmosphere of Hindhead and environs, and the Devil's Jumps and Punchbowl really caught my imagination. I see you have videos available, and hope you may have one which shows them from the air.

NOTES AND NEWS

SEMG site on the World-wide Web

Our group now has a site on the World-wide Web on the Internet; the address is: <http://www.surreymc.gov.uk/outreach/semg.htm> At the moment we have a general description of the group and its activities, a history of ley hunting, an illustrated account of our researches into the E-line, and The Hidden Unity, brought out some years ago as a booklet and now on our website with more illustrations. It is concerned with subconscious siting of sacred sites of all kinds on leys and the significance of this to world religions.

TEMS meeting

Sunday 25th August. Nick Pope, author of *Open Skies, Closed Minds*, has agreed to

address a meeting of TEMS at The Greenwood Centre, School Road, off Windmill Road, Hampton Hill, Middlesex. 2.30 to 5.30 p.m. including tea break. Admission: ASSAP/TEMS members £2.50, non-members £3.

London Earth Mysteries Circle meetings

7.00 p.m. Tuesdays, at The Meeting Room, Diarama Centre, 34, Osnaburgh Street, London, NW1.

September 10th - New revolutions about the Druids, by Steve Wilson.

September 24th - The Fellowship of Isis, by Olivia Robertson.

October 8th - A ghost hunter's diary, by Mike Lewis.

October 22nd - Devas: The Angels of Nature, by David Goddard.

November 12th - Ancient Sites of Ireland, by Ted McNamara.

November 26th - The Hidden Symbolism of the Coronation.

Entrance: £2.50. Unwaged: £2. Members: £1.50.

Earth Lights in Ireland

Eileen Roche was visiting the dolmen at Fourknocks in Ireland recently with a group of friends; the stones are lavishly decorated with megalithic art, including an undulating line running right round the structure. Some of those present decided to take this as meaning a musical sound and proceeded round the site chanting, using the line as musical notation. A bright light emerged from the stones, ran round the top of them and then rose upwards and disappeared.

BOOK REVIEWS

Goddesses, Guardians & Groves - The Awakening Spirit of the Land.

Author: Jack Gale. Publisher: Capall Bann 1996. Cost: £10.95 Paperback

ISBN: 1898307504

This is another book in the rapidly emerging genre of uncloseted Earth Mysterians encouraged by these publishers. Last year we had the joy of Philip Heselton's books on goddesses in the landscape, and it is interesting to see Jack Gale's work continuing the type. This is a definable style of the late 1990s, wherein articulate people who feel close to the spirits of the land share their perceptions and feelings. It reflects the current trend away from science alone towards trusting intuition, spirituality and mysticism.

In this work, Jack Gale, well-known to many for his Greenwich walks, draws on a lifetime's experience of sensing the numinous and experiencing the living pagan heritage of his birthplace. His combination of psychic methods, counterbalancing and enhancing archival records, drawing from the past to enliven the present, is to be recommended. The author welds together many disparate approaches to present a unified picture of landscape

perception.

Although the book is mainly about Greenwich, its message and lessons can be transferred easily to other sacred sites in the landscape. For readers interested in aspects of "pathworking" or guided meditation, suggestions are compiled in an appendix at the end. The work will appeal to those interested in Greenwich itself, in earth mysteries, goddess worship, or pagan practices.

Jack elegantly mixes interesting snippets from history books, archaeological reports, documentation of myths and legends, museum artifacts, and architectural reports with for example, use of runes, automatic drawing, psychic readings, and map dowsing. With considerable agility, deities of the northern tradition such as Holda or Odin, as well as Roman deities such as Diana, are personified, appearing in Greenwich Park, alongside other characters such as the historical Duke Humphrey, or the intriguing Jumping Jack Black. Even the Vikings get a mention.

Solstice trips, Lammas celebrations and Imbolc visits are all described in the context of the awakening spirit of the land, along with descriptions of tunnels, caverns, fountains and groves. The action takes place amidst the delightful place-names such as Snow Well and Plum Pudding Hill.

Jack Gale investigates an official threat to a sacred site (the familiar vandalism or preservation argument): the proposed concretisation of one Greenwich site, and the concurrent organised protest against it. He also provides tips on how to commune with landscape sites, including the use of rituals with music, water and fire.

He has some rather irritating stylistic mannerisms and colloquialisms, but the work is illustrated with useful maps, good photographs, examples of psychic drawing, and dynamic drawings of the Greenwich deities.

Perhaps the best aspect of this book is the author's use of the many and different skills of a variety of people, in his attempts to corroborate and verify findings and interpretations. This reaching towards a formal and intelligent convergence of the objective with the subjective is long overdue.

E.Roche June 1996

TEMS Hertfordshire Field Trip - July 28th

Members of TEMS and SEMG met at the north door of St. Albans Abbey Cathedral for this field trip. Lionel pointed out the Roman bricks, "recycled" from Verulamium, which comprised the tower. As an abbey it held the remains of St. Alban, the first Christian martyr in England, and was a place of pilgrimage. The shrine has been restored to its ancient

splendour, and we saw the "watching gallery" where monks kept watch over it in the Middle Ages. Relics of saints were valuable commodities then and the threat of theft was significant. We also saw wall paintings which had been uncovered in fairly recent times.

There was a service going on in another part of the building while we were there, and Eileen Roche noted that the feeling of energy in the building seemed to rise and fall in waves with the music, seeming strongest when the deeper notes were sung.

We continued from here to the medieval clock tower which held one of the earliest clocks in England outside a church. It was apparently built as a political statement to assert the townsmen's freedom, power and wealth in the face of such an important Abbey. The medieval clock has gone but there is another in its place, and the tower has had many other uses; to ring curfews and alarms, to house shops and as a semaphore station in the Napoleonic Wars.

An interesting alignment was visible from the top; the Cathedral nearby was of course in view, as was another church in the town in the other direction. It could be seen that this church, the small Gothic spirelet on the tower, and the east end of the cathedral were in alignment. This spire was only added in 1865-6 at the tower's restoration by Sir Gilbert Scott.

The next location we were to visit was Beech Bottom Dyke, an immense ditch running for a great distance, and with the road crossing it on a causeway constructed much later. This seemed a very numinous place, with very many double trees and a number twisted into strange shapes. Examination seemed to indicate that these did not seem to be the result of coppicing, as there was no evidence of thick stumps with much thinner trunks rising from them. Dowsing reaction seemed strong in all parts of the dyke.

Our lunch was taken near the Wicked Lady pub, named after the notorious highwaywoman Lady Catherine Ferrers, now immortalised in the film with Margaret Lockwood in the title role. The atmosphere of the place was enhanced when a horse-drawn coach and wagon clattered past.

We then went to visit the Devil's Dyke, a similar structure to the previous one visited (with similar trees and feeling). There is some argument among archaeologists as to whether the two are connected.

Our final visit was to the Roman bath house at Welwyn. Once attached to a villa, it was only rediscovered shortly before the A1(M) was planned to go over its site. High level intervention caused a special vault to be built over the remains, covered in corrugated metal. The motorway was then built over it, and it is accessible through a tunnel. The expertise of the design and construction, with hot, tepid and cold bath rooms, showed the seriousness with which the Romans regarded bathing. The bath was a social centre where people would

meet friends and transact business.

After this, we went to Joy's house in Cuffley for a welcome and splendid tea, followed by a talk by Ruth Green on beings from other dimensions in British folk tradition. Her contention was that these beings, known by a variety of names, were beings occupying the same space and time as ourselves, but on a different dimension. Some of the stories have lasted five thousand years, but modern education and the ever-encroaching city causes us to lose connection with the earth and to make these stories seem irrelevant and false. Books such as the Victorian "Flower Fairies" series also seems to trivialise these beings by romanticising them and making them harmless.

The generic term was "elf" and there were three broad categories; light elves, dark elves and mortal elves. Light elves were large; Arthur's "Lady of the Lake" was one of these - various names included sidhe, shee, gwragedd and annwn. Dark elves were dwarves, smiths, knockers and trolls and were concerned with metals and mining. The former two were immortal; but there were also mortal elves (though of much longer lifespan than humans) including pixies, piskies, fair folk, hobgoblins, boggarts and mer people. The Rev. Robert Kirk, an eighteenth century clergyman, felt that they were somewhere between man and the angels and had bodies like condensed cloud.

A number of stories of these beings were then related, which indicated a number of rules to follow - the bwbach for example is helpful if not offended, otherwise can be like a poltergeist. A woman who went to live in a haunted house asked permission to live there, and was given it if she did not use the back door, where there was an elf path. Older miners who left a mine after hearing knocking were saved from a roof fall which killed the younger ones who ignored it. May and Halloween were said to be the main times for fairies dancing, which coincides with the rising and setting of the Pleiades. There were a number of stories of people who strayed into fairy rings and finding a great deal of time had passed when they left. There were also stories of marriages between humans and mer people, which had strange rules attached to them, such as not striking them three times.

We finally heard of rules to observe when dealing with the fair folk. They did not like trees and stones to be removed, or their paths blocked; neither did they like joyless people or religion (by tradition miners would not cross themselves when underground). They should be allowed to borrow, and their advice should be followed. One should not comment if they appear to have bird feet, and if a circle is entered one should not expect to be able to get out; similarly if one has sex with them one should not expect to return to human relationships. If married to one, you should not reproach them for their fairy origin. Children can be protected with rowan, iron or early baptism.

Another railway crop circle

Doris was at the summer school of her ordination course on our wedding anniversary this year, so I decided to go to Salisbury to spend the evening with her. On the way, not far out of Basingstoke, I saw a "ring" crop circle in a field - a narrow annular ring with a small filled in circle in the centre. I must have missed it on the way back, but I saw another which seemed to back on to the railway line; this seemed to be a larger filled in circle with some kind of maze pattern attached to it, although, as the famous poem puts it, it was only a glimpse. Then, when going on to the Web with an address Doris had found from the notice board at the college, I found that these two were in fact in the same field, near Oakley! I never seem to see them when travelling by road!

Blandford

Blandford are a very prolific publishing firm, a subsidiary of Cassell, who have for some time been publishing books of interest to Earth Mysteries enthusiasts and those of similar interests. I have been sent quite a large number to review, but unfortunately do not have the space in this small magazine to do them all justice.

There have been a number of themes that have predominated in Blandford's output; one of them is Arthurian legend. *Arthurian Myth and Legend* is a gazetteer of people and places in Arthurian tradition, while *The Unknown Arthur* gives a wealth of little-known tales. There was also a book devoted to Merlin.

Another theme is the Celtic, and subjects covered are myth and legend, art, ornamentation and Christian Celtic saints. There are also UFO books, including the recent and very thought-provoking *UFO Visitation*, by Alan Watts. A huge and exhaustively researched book on the Druids, *The Druid Source Book*, has also recently been published, and there is one on the myths of the Middle Ages.



THE HIDDEN UNITY and BEGINNINGS

The Hidden Unity looks at the strange phenomenon of subconscious siting of ley points, and notes that places of worship, of all religions and all ages, tend to predominate on leys. The environmental and philosophical implications of this are discussed, and the apparent necessity of worship but irrelevance of doctrine. Two ley centres are given as examples, and investigated in depth - the Shah Jehan Mosque in Woking and the Guru Nanak Sikh Temple, Scunthorpe. There is an appendix by Eileen Grimshaw on the significance of the Pagan religion to this study. Illustrated with photographs, maps and line drawings.

Beginnings is about a series of potentially useful discoveries, mainly made by Jimmy Goddard over a period of about twenty years, but having some overlap with discoveries made by others. For various reasons, the investigations are all in their early stages, and some have not been continued. They include earth energy detection, natural antigravity, subconscious siting, ley width, and the solar transition effect. There is also a chapter on cognitive dissonance - a psychological factor which seems to have been at the root of all bigotry - scientific, religious and other - down the ages. The booklet is concluded with an account of the discovery of leys by Alfred Watkins.

EARTH PEOPLE, SPACE PEOPLE

In 1961, Tony Wedd produced a manuscript *Earth Men, Space Men*, detailing many claims of extraterrestrial contact. It was never published, and the MS is presumably lost. To try to make up for the loss in a much more modest size, this booklet has been prepared. As well as giving details of some of the more prominent contact claims, there are articles on the history of the STAR Fellowship and some of its personalities, evidence for life in the Solar System and investigation into extraterrestrial language.

Each booklet is £2 plus 30p p&p from the Touchstone address.

TOUCHSTONE is the newsletter of the Surrey Earth Mysteries Group. £2 for four quarterly issues from J. Goddard, 25, Albert Road, Addlestone, Weybridge, Surrey, KT15. 2PX. Please make cheques payable to J. Goddard. IF YOUR SUBSCRIPTION IS DUE AN "X" WILL FOLLOW THIS SENTENCE: